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# LIBRARIANS' CONVENTION



PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LIBRARIANS' CONVENTION, <sup>New York</sup>

1853

HELD IN

NEW YORK CITY

SEPTEMBER 15, 16, AND 17  
1853



REPRINTED FOR  
WILLIAM H. MURRAY

1915

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE LIBRARIANS' CONVENTION

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## CALL

THE undersigned, believing that the knowledge of Books, and the foundation and management of collections of them for public use, may be promoted by consultation and concert among librarians and others interested in bibliography, respectfully invite such persons to meet IN CONVENTION AT NEW YORK, ON THURSDAY, THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, for the purpose of conferring together upon the means of advancing the prosperity and usefulness of public libraries, and for the suggestion and discussion of topics of importance to book collectors and readers.

MAY, 1853.

CHAS. FOLSOM, Boston Athenaeum.

C. C. JEWETT, Smithsonian Institution.

T. W. HARRIS, Harvard College.

PHILIP J. FORBES, Society Library, New York.

SAMUEL F. HAVEN, American Antiquarian Society.

BARNAS SEARS, Massachusetts State Library.

E. C. HERRICK, Yale College.

JOSHUA LEAVITT, American Geographical and Statistical Society.

EDWARD E. HALE, Worcester, Massachusetts.

HENRY BARNARD, Hartford, Connecticut.

J. W. CHAMBERS, American Institute.

WM. E. JILLSON, Providence, Rhode Island.

A. J. UPSON, Hamilton College.

JAMES GREEN, Baltimore Mercantile Library.

W. A. JONES, Columbia College.

R. A. GUILD, Brown University.

G. H. MOORE, New York Historical Society.

W. F. POOLE, Boston Mercantile Library.

N. B. SHURTLEFF, American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

S. HASTINGS GRANT, New York Mercantile Library.

L. M. BOLTWOOD, Amherst College.

WM. P. CURTIS, St. Louis Mercantile Library.

R. H. STEPHENSON, Cincinnati Mercantile Library.

H. M. BAILEY, Hartford Young Men's Institute.

GEO. E. DAY, Lane Seminary.

LLOYD P. SMITH, Philadelphia Library Company.

## PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with the foregoing call, the following persons assembled at the rooms of the University of the City of New York, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, September 15, 16, and 17, 1853. It will be seen that more than eighty gentlemen were present, the representatives of forty-seven different libraries. These institutions are located in thirteen different States, and contain collectively over six hundred thousand volumes.

### DELEGATES

#### *District of Columbia*

Prof. C. C. JEWETT, Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

#### *Maine*

JAMES MERRILL, Librarian of the Athenæum, Portland.

Prof. ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK, Bowdoin College, Brunswick.

*Massachusetts*

CHARLES FOLSOM, Esq., Librarian of the Athenæum, Boston.

WM. F. POOLE, Librarian of the Mercantile Library Association, Boston.

S. F. HAVEN, Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester.

REV. EDW. E. HALE, Worcester.

*Rhode Island*

R. A. GUILD, Librarian of Brown University, Providence.

THOMAS HALE WILLIAMS, Librarian of the Athenæum, Providence.

ALBERT J. JONES, Director of the Athenæum, Providence.

CHAS. W. JENCKS, Librarian of the Mechanics' Library, Providence.

CHAS. AKERMAN, Director of the Mechanics' Library, Providence.

S. BALLOU, Carrington Library, Rhode Island.

*Connecticut*

HON. HENRY BARNARD, Superintendent of Common Schools, Hartford.

HENRY M. BAILEY, Librarian of the Young Men's Institute, Hartford.

DANIEL C. GILMAN, Delegate from the Linonian Library of Yale College, New Haven.

REV. JAS. T. DICKINSON, Durham.

*New York City and State*

PHILIP J. FORBES, Esq., Librarian of the New York Society Library, New York.

GEO. H. MOORE, Librarian of the New York Historical Society, New York.

Prof. HENRY B. SMITH, D. D., Librarian of the Union Theological Seminary, New York.

- J. L. LYONS, Assistant Librarian of the Union Theological Seminary, New York.
- WM. CURTIS NOYES, Esq., Librarian of the New York Law Institute, New York.
- WM. A. JONES, Librarian of Columbia College, New York.
- JOHN L. VANDERVOORT, M. D., Librarian of the New York Hospital, New York.
- Prof. HOWARD CROSBY, Librarian of the University of the City of New York.
- JAMES HENRY, Jr., Actuary of the Mechanics' Institute, New York.
- WM. OLAND BOURNE, Assistant Librarian of the Free Academy, New York.
- E. A. HARRIS, Librarian of the American Institute, New York.
- S. HASTINGS GRANT, Librarian of the Mercantile Library, New York.
- WM VAN NORDLIN, Representative of the Apprentices' Library, New York.
- HENRY GITTERMAN, Assistant Librarian of the Hebrew Young Men's Literary Association, New York.
- J. DISTURNELL, Member of the American Geographical and Statistical Society, New York.
- REV. ISAAC FERRIS, D. D., Chancellor of the University of the City of New York.
- REV. THOMAS DE WITT, D. D., Vice President of the New York Historical Society, New York.
- DANIEL W. FISKE, Assistant Librarian of the Astor Library, New York.
- MAUNSELL B. FIELD, Esq., Recording Secretary of the New York Historical Society, New York.
- EDWIN WILLIAMS, of the Library Committee of the American Institute, New York.

- Rev. GORHAM D. ABBOTT, Principal of the Spingler Institute, New York.
- Prof. BENJ. N. MARTIN, University of the City of New York.
- Prof. JOHN TORREY, of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York.
- Rev. SAMUEL OSGOOD, Delegate from the Providence Athenæum.
- WM. C. GILMAN, Esq., New York.
- Prof. GEORGE W. GREENE, New York.
- Rev. E. H. CHAPIN, New York.
- JOHN BANVARD, New York.
- CHARLES B. NORTON, *Literary Gazette*, New York.
- AUG. MAVERICK, *New York Times*.
- J. W. KENNADY, *New York Express*.
- J. S. THAYER, *Evening Post*, New York.
- JOHN J. SCHROEDER, New York.
- EDWIN H. GRANT, M. D., New York.
- S. S. PURPLE, M. D., New York.
- Mr. PERRY, of the Astor Library, New York.
- ROBERT DODGE, New York.
- AUG. K. GARDNER, M. D., New York.
- THOMAS J. SAWYER, New York.
- JOSEPH F. NOYES, Librarian of the Athenæum, Brooklyn.
- GEO. H. STEBBINS, Principal of Public Schools, Brooklyn.
- HAROLD HINDE, Brooklyn.
- Capt. HENRY COPPEE, Librarian of the U. S. Military Academy, West Point.
- Prof. A. J. UPSON, Librarian of Hamilton College, Clinton.
- H. P. FILER, Librarian of the Young Men's Association, Troy.
- W. T. WILLARD, Librarian of the Lyceum of Natural History, Troy.

ELIAS S. HAWLEY, Representative of the Young Men's Association, Buffalo.

C. H. RAYMOND, Buffalo.

*New Jersey*

Prof. G. M. GIGER, Librarian of the College of New Jersey, Princeton.

Prof. W. HENRY GREEN, Librarian of the Theological Seminary, Princeton.

F. W. RICORD, Librarian of the Newark Library Association, Newark.

Rev. C. R. V. ROMONDT, Librarian of Rutgers College, New Brunswick.

S. G. DEETH, New Brunswick and Washington, D. C.

WM. COOPER, Hoboken.

*Pennsylvania*

LLOYD P. SMITH, Librarian of the Library Company, Philadelphia.

JOHN WM. WALLACE, Librarian of the Law Association, Philadelphia.

*Maryland*

JAMES GREEN, Librarian of the Mercantile Library Association, Baltimore.

A. C. RHODES, Vice President of the Mercantile Library Association, Baltimore.

*Ohio*

ELIJAH HAYWARD, Librarian of the State Library, Columbus.

R. H. STEPHENSON, Librarian of the Mercantile Library Association, Cincinnati.

*Missouri*

W. P. CURTIS, Librarian of the Mercantile Library Association, St. Louis.

FREDERICK VINTON, St. Louis.

*Louisiana*

JOHN L. SHEAFE, Librarian of the State Library of Louisiana, New Orleans.

B. F. FRENCH, Representative of the Fisk Free Library, New Orleans.

*California*

EDWARD E. DUNBAR, Delegate from the Mercantile Library Association, San Francisco.

Apologies were also presented from the following gentlemen, unable to be present:

Dr. Cogswell, of the Astor Library; Prof. Beck, of the New York State Library; Dr. Harris, of Harvard College Library; E. C. Herrick, Esq., of Yale College Library; Dr. Sears, of the Massachusetts State Library; George Livermore, Esq., of Boston; Prof. Johnson, of the New York State Agricultural Society; Rev. Adolph Frost, of the Burlington (N. J.) College Library, and Wm. MacDermott, of Norristown Library, Pennsylvania.

## OFFICERS

The Convention was called to order by Charles Folsom, Esq., of the Boston Athenæum, and, upon motion, the following persons were chosen officers:

President — Prof. CHAS. C. JEWETT, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

Secretary — S. HASTINGS GRANT, Mercantile Library Association, New York City.

Business Committee — CHARLES FOLSOM, Athenæum, Boston; PHILIP J. FORBES, Society Library, New York; J. W. WALLACE, Law Association, Philadelphia; R. A. GUILD, Brown University, Providence; R. H. STEPHENSON, Mercantile Library Association, Cincinnati; with the President and Secretary of the Convention.

## OPENING ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

Prof. JEWETT, upon taking the chair, acknowledged the honor conferred upon him, and proceeded to remark as follows:

It must be highly gratifying to those who signed the call for this Convention to notice the response which it, this morning, receives. To every one who knows the nature of a librarian's duties,—the details which consume his days, and render absence from his post impossible, except at the cost of severe labor on his return,—it must be manifest that we have met at considerable personal sacrifice. We obey some strong and wide-felt impulse in incurring the expense and the trouble of this gathering.

The call for this Convention was not the result of a correspondence among librarians, nor was it the subject of long and careful consideration. It was, rather, a spontaneous movement. It was first, I think, suggested a year ago, or more, in the *Literary Gazette*. Librarians spoke to each other on the matter, when they happened to meet. Every one was pleased with the idea. At length a formal call was written, and signed by a few who happened to meet the gentlemen having charge of the paper.

In compliance with such an invitation, we have assembled this morning. It is not, so far as I know, proposed to accomplish any end by this Convention, beyond the general one expressed in the call, of "conferring together upon the means of advancing the prosperity and usefulness of public libraries," and of seeking mutual instruction and encouragement in the discharge of the quiet and unostentatious labors of our vocation for which each, at his separate post, finds perhaps but little sympathy — for which each, when at home, must derive enthusiasm only from within himself, and from the silent masters of his daily communion.

We have no peculiar views to present, no particular set of measures to propose. We meet without preparation. No order of business has been arranged. Our proceedings must be spontaneous as our meeting. It is not important that they be systematic and formal. We come to receive and to act upon suggestions. We are not here for stately debate, for conspicuous action, much less for an exhibition of ourselves. These things are foreign from our vocation, and not congenial with our tastes. We meet for familiar, informal, conversational conference, where each may take his part, and no one be prevented from contrib-



uting his share to the profits of the enterprise, by his inexperience in public speaking, or his inability to make elaborate preparation. Those gentlemen connected with the public press who honor us with their presence, must have been attracted hither by a scholarlike sympathy with our quiet pursuits, which lead them to appreciate our feelings in this respect, in the reports which they may give.

It is indeed to be hoped that our meeting will have its influence upon the public mind. If our discussions are natural and unrestrained, suggested and shaped by right views of the position which we hold, or ought to hold, in general society and in the republic of letters; if they present to ourselves and to others the difficulties with which we have to contend; if they elicit thought and information upon the collecting of books for private culture, for public enlightenment, and for learned investigations, and upon the best means of promoting the increase and efficiency of such collections; — if we manifest here, while we talk of books as material objects, and of books in their internal significance, that respectful, dignified, and noiseless spirit inspired by the associations in the midst of which we live, the public will certainly feel and acknowledge the beneficial influence of our meeting, and will desire an official report of the progress and results of our deliberations.

The occasion is one of peculiar interest. This is the first convention of the kind, not only in this country, but, so far as I know, in the world.

There have, indeed, been bibliographical associations, but they have been, for the most part, composed of *dilettante*, and not of practical librarians and lovers of books. The gratification of a passion for rare and curious books has generally been their object. Books were too often valuable to them, only as they were worthless to the rest of the world. Each member glorying in the possession of a unique copy of some old work, was required to reprint it, with only copies enough to give one to each member. One society has played the part of *bibliotaph* by requiring that if a member dies, and his copy of one of these reprints is to be sold by auction, it shall be bought by the Society at any price it may be necessary to pay.

These associations have had their origin in a different state of society from ours. We can at present have but little sympathy with their principal design. We have none whatever with their selfishness.

We would not be supposed to chide the passion for book rarities, where it exhibits itself simply in collecting and preserving what is curious and costly, and not in its destruction or concealment. Why

should not a rich man spend his money in this way, as well as in a thousand others which are harmless? We may go further, and assert that a collection of rare books can scarcely be formed, without subserving the interests of learning, whether made with such a design or not. The public are not unfrequently surprised by results anticipated only by the collector.

I may allude, in this connection, to a distinguished gentleman in our own country, who made, at great expense, a collection of early-printed books, without any regard to the subjects of which they treated, the languages in which they were written, or their worth as literary productions. By those who did not know his purpose, he was called a *bibliomaniac*. He had however, a definite object in view, which was, to investigate the early history of typography by its monuments. Books which he never cared to read, were full of instruction to him. He deduced from the close examination of them, many facts new to the bibliographical world, and showed the unsoundness of many generally received theories. For example, he satisfied himself that books in the early days of typography, were never printed from block letters, that is, from separate types of wood, or of wood faced with metal. He proved, too, that many of these books were printed one page at a time. It had been supposed that the early printers must have had immense fonts of type. In many folios the sheets are quired, and it was very naturally supposed that the type of every page of the quire must have been set up before any was printed off. But he traced a broken letter from page to page, and he found such irregularities of register as could not have occurred, had the two pages of the same form been printed at the same time; and he thus demonstrated that these books were printed page by page, and that consequently only a very small font of type was necessary.

Now, these are new, interesting, and valuable results; and they are only specimens which occur to me at the moment, of deductions from the examination of books, which an ordinary observer would say it was infatuation to collect.

But our object, at present, is of a more manifestly and eminently practical and utilitarian character. We meet to provide for the diffusion of a knowledge of good books, and for enlarging the means of public access to them. Our wishes are for the public, not for ourselves.

In our assembling to-day we obey the impulses of our peculiar civilization. We are pre-eminently a reading people. In Prussia the whole

population are taught to read; but a distinguished citizen of that country, who had traveled in the United States, once expressed to me the difference between his own countrymen and the Americans, by saying: "Our people *can* read, your people *do* read." The generally diffused love of reading, for the sake of gaining information, has led to the establishment of a large number of libraries, so that, in the number and general diffusion of small collections of books, we are richer already than any other country in the world. Reading creates the desire to read more, and select reading increases the desire to read profitably. Hence, in every village the questions are asked: "How shall we get good books? How shall we keep them? How shall we use them?" To consult on the best replies to questions like these, is one of the objects of our assembling to-day.

Another demand of our peculiar civilization is, for the means of thorough and independent investigation. We wish to own no men as masters. We intend to re-examine all history from our own American standpoint, and we must re-write it, where we find its facts have been tortured to teach the doctrines of injustice and oppression. The mental activity of this country is surveying every field of research, literary, scientific, æsthetic, industrial, and philanthropic. It requires to know what others have done and thought, that it may itself press farther outward. This country, therefore, demands the means of the amplest research, and this demand must and will be met.

These views have impressed themselves deeply upon our minds, as we are the appointed custodians of the literary treasures of the country, and have led us to desire mutual assistance and concentration of efforts in providing for these intellectual necessities of our American life. For our present meeting it has been proposed to adopt the simplest form of organization; to appoint, besides a president and a secretary, a business committee to receive suggestions and propositions, and arrange the order of proceedings for each day's session. I unite most cordially in the hope which I have heard expressed this morning, that this Convention may be the precursor of a permanent and highly useful association.

#### COURTESIES

Invitations were received and accepted to visit the following libraries: Astor, Society, Historical, Union, Theological, Columbia College, Mercantile, American Institute, Me-

chanics' Institute, and Free Academy; also from the directors of the Crystal Palace, through T. Sedgwick, Esq., to visit the Exhibition of Industry; from Mr. Bryan, to the Gallery of Christian Art; from Dr. Abbott, to the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities; and from Mr. Banvard, to his Panorama of the Holy Land.

An invitation to a social gathering at the Kemble House was also presented by members of the Convention from the city of New York.

#### REPORTS FROM LIBRARIES

Early in the Convention, reports were presented by the different librarians present, in regard to the condition of the institutions in their charge. These returns have been incorporated, in an afterpart of this Register, with recent information received from other libraries.

Among other remarks, the following were made by Capt. Coppée, in regard to the Library of the United States Military Academy, at West Point.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention:*

The Institution which I have the honor to represent is certainly peculiar and unique — both *sui juris* and *sui generis* — in that it is under the control of the general government, and that its special character is military and scientific.

You have read the "*Médecin malgré lui*;" I may truly say that when I was appointed Librarian of the Military Academy, I was a librarian in spite of myself. The little service I had seen, and the partial fondness for certain kinds of reading, had given me no knowledge of the great progressive science of bibliography, a science nobler in its results than simple authorship, in that it classifies and makes available at one intelligent glance, masses of matter, rich specimens of mental ore, which otherwise would lie hidden and useless to the world.

What, however, was received with reluctance, has been retained with pleasure, and pursued with such ardor as the pressure of other duties would permit.

The library of the Military Academy is sustained and increased by an appropriation of \$1,000 a year, which I regret to be obliged to say, is found insufficient to keep pace with the valuable publications in our special branches. Some years, owing to a spirit of retrenchment in Congress, this inadequate sum has been intermitted, and then, in military phrase we "mark time" for a year, which is, in effect, retrograding to an alarming degree. "Not to advance," says a good maxim, "is to fall back:" the individual student and the public library alike verify its truth.

When the appointment of Librarian was conferred upon me, I found that, with a rigor at once ill-judged and ill-productive, almost all light literature,—poetry, fiction and some of those charming modern works, which, verily, can only be characterized as lying between the two,—a delectable land of the heart and the imaginations,—had been interdicted. Since that time, careful additions of standard works of these classes have been made; we ventured, sir, upon a set of the Waverly Novels, and introduced the Corps of Cadets to the Great Magician—need I add, with perfect satisfaction to all concerned.

I have one word to add in favor of a popular direction to our proceedings. It is in accordance with the pervading spirit of our government. The people, sir, are the rule; everything else, the exception.

Let our deliberations, then, not lose sight of this fact. Rare books cost great prices, and are read afterwards by few,—the scholars, the great book-makers for future generations—and these should not be neglected; but, first remember, that good current learning and knowledge, facts and practical science for the million are within the reach of small sums, the assessment of which will scarcely be felt by the poorest, and the aggregate of which will astonish the people by its greatness, and enlighten the world by its influence.

#### THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION AND ITS PLAN OF CATALOGING

Mr. Haven, of Worcester, having been called to the Chair, an exposition was made in regard to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, by Prof. Charles G. Jewett.

He first presented the following table, which exhibits the number of books and other articles added to the library of the Smithsonian Institution during the year 1852, with the sources from which they were received:

	Books	Pamph.	Parts	Eng'gs.	Maps	Music	Drawings	Other Articles	Totals
By Purchase.....	641	918	1568	—	—	—	—	—	3127
By Donations.....	1481	1935	171	10	1698	—	—	41	5336
By Copyright.....	476	96	26	15	10	692	9	19	1343
Totals .....	2598	2949	1765	25	1708	692	9	60	9806

The extent of the various collections in the library, at the end of 1852, is shown by the following table:

	Books	Pamph.	Parts	Eng'gs.	Maps	Music	Drawings	Other Articles	Totals
By Purchase.....	3873	957	1568	1335	2	—	—	—	7735
By Donations.....	2657	3872	171	58	1725	—	30	41	8554
By Copyright.....	2304	213	26	24	51	1826	9	86	4539
By Deposit.....	873	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	873
Totals .....	9707	5042	1765	1417	1778	1826	39	127	21701

In answer to various inquiries, Prof. Jewett also stated in this connection, that the average number of books annually received under the copyright law was about 450. He presumed that this was not more than one-third of all the books copyrighted in the country. The laws regulating the deposit were defective. One copy is required to be deposited with the District Clerk and by him to be transmitted to the Department of State at Washington; one copy is also required to be deposited in the Library of Congress, and one in the Library of the Smithsonian Institution. A larger number of these books is probably received at the Smithsonian Institution than in either of the other libraries. The deposit in the State Department is regarded as burdensome, and the President, in a recent message,

recommended that the copyright business be transferred from the Department. There ought to be somewhere a complete collection of these books, as there is of models of machines in the Patent Office. The protection of authors and publishers requires that certified copies of their publications should be preserved. The public have also a great interest in providing that one copy of everything issued from the press should be preserved for future reference. It was hoped that some modifications of the present laws might be made, which would secure both these ends and at the same time diminish the present requirements from publishers. No provision was made by law for transmitting these books to the places of deposit. Consequently many of those deposited with the District Clerks never reach the State Department. Some of those sent to the Smithsonian Institution, cost twenty times what they are worth, being sent, by mail, sealed, by publishers who suppose that the Institution possesses the franking privilege.

Prof. JEWETT then proceeded as follows:

It is well known to you, Mr. Chairman, and to other gentlemen present, that previous to the passage of the act of Congress establishing the Smithsonian Institution, various propositions were from time to time made to Congress, for the appropriation of the fund bequeathed to the United States by James Smithson, "to found at Washington an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." One project was to establish an astronomical observatory, another to form an agricultural school, another to found a National University, another to place the money under the charge of the National Institute, &c., &c. No one of the many plans suggested met the approval of Congress, until Mr. Choate proposed, and in one of his most brilliant and effective speeches advocated, the establishment of a great central library of reference and research. His bill met with general approval and passed the Senate, but was lost among other unfinished business in the lower House. At the next session of Congress, a select committee was appointed by the House of Representatives, upon the administration of the Smithsonian trust. The members of this committee were divided in opinion. They finally

reported a bill, in which the Library was a subordinate but still an important feature. When this bill came up for discussion, Mr. Choate's plan was vigorously attacked by one of the leading members of the committee; but it found powerful advocates. Mr. Marsh defended the library in a speech of great learning, ability and eloquence. So strongly did the House approve of Mr. Marsh's views, that when he introduced a series of amendments, designed, as he expressly stated, "to direct the appropriation entirely to the purpose of a library," everything which he proposed was adopted. Congress refused to limit the annual appropriation for the Library to 10,000, or even to 20,000 dollars. By fixing the maximum of the annual appropriation at \$25,000, a sum nearly equal to the whole income of the fund, Congress unequivocally indicated its intentions, had they not been sufficiently clear by other votes.

The principal management of the Institution was intrusted to a Board of Regents, composed of three Senators, three Representatives, six citizens of the States, appointed by joint resolution, and three members ex-officio, namely, the Vice President of the United States, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Mayor of the City of Washington. It was soon found that there were two prominent parties in the Board — not hostile parties, for there is nothing hostile in such matters, but parties of different views in reference to the objects to be pursued by the Institution. One party was in favor of adhering to the library plan, stamped as it was with the approval of Congress; the other was in favor of expending the income in publications and scientific researches. After considerable discussion, it was agreed to divide the income of the Institution permanently between the two great departments: that of collections in literature, science and art, and that of publications and scientific researches.

This plan was followed for a time, but at present a large portion of the fund is appropriated to other purposes than those of the Library. During the last year only about 1,000 dollars were expended in the purchase of books, and during the present year a still smaller sum will be thus devoted. It has seemed to me my duty to state to you these facts, in order that you might understand the precise position of the Smithsonian Library, the ground of the expectations which had been raised respecting it, and the reasons why they had not been realized. I am happy to add to the statement which I have made, that whatever may have been the feeling with reference to the purchase of books, the "active operations" of the



library department—the collection and publication of statistics of libraries, the increase and dissemination of bibliographical knowledge, the development and support of the catalogue system, &c., have met with cordial approval and support. This must be gratifying to those who hear me. I doubt not that whatever may be the policy of the Institution with reference to its own collections, it will do all that its means will allow for the benefit of other libraries.

For myself I have always believed and still believe, that a large central library of reference and research will be collected at the Smithsonian Institution, if not by the expenditure of the funds of the Institution, by other means. The funds of the Institution are very small, in comparison with the necessities of literature and science in this country, and when we are obliged to choose among worthy objects, there will be sure to be different opinions. I feel, however, that the formation of the library is a matter sure to be accomplished—if not immediately, yet before many years. A great central library is an important national object; as necessary, to secure the literary independence of this people, as was the war of the Revolution to secure its political independence. It is an object which, besides attracting donations and bequests from the rich, may receive appropriations from our national treasury. Congress, having the control of the treasury of this rich, mighty, and intelligent nation, will not, I believe, be backward in making appropriations for this object, whenever it shall be suitably presented to them. Congress may be regarded as liberal in matters of science and of learning, whenever they are sure that the money will be honestly and properly expended. Many men do not believe this. But look at the action for replenishing the desolated hall of the Library of Congress. Most persons were of opinion that Congress could not be brought to make an appropriation exceeding \$30,000 for this purpose; but, when Mr. Chandler proposed \$75,000, it was readily granted. It would have been had he asked \$200,000, if they had thought that sum necessary, and believed that it would be honestly and judiciously devoted to the gathering of a good library.

There is one other remark I wish to make respecting the position of the Smithsonian Institution among the other literary Institutions of the country. So far as I know, it possesses claims, desires, no authority or power of dictation. The principle has been established and steadily pursued, of occupying, as far as possible, untenanted ground. The position of the Institution at Washington, its connec-

tion with the government, and its large fund, devoted by its donor and by the act of Congress to the promotion of the cause of knowledge, give to it the means of doing much which could not otherwise be accomplished for literature and science. In these efforts it needs and relies on the cordial support of other institutions, which, I am happy to say, it has always received. Whenever it is found that any other society or any individual is ready and able to take up and carry out its plans, they are immediately relinquished by us. I may here give one instance, that of Mr. Norton's *Literary Gazette*. Mr. Norton had formed the plan of publishing the *Gazette*, without knowing that a similar project had been recommended by myself for the bibliographical department of the *Smithsonian Bulletin*. He proposed to give the bibliographical intelligence in connection with advertisements, which he thought would eventually be profitable to him. When he saw what I had written, he came on to Washington, and offered to abandon his plan. But we were glad to find that he was willing to undertake to accomplish the same purpose which we had in view, and gave up the whole to him, offering him such assistance as we could render, and encouraging him to believe that the enterprise would prove a profitable one. I am happy to know that this expectation has been fully justified; and I hope that the prosperity of this useful journal will continually increase.

In reference to these remarks, Mr. HAYWARD, of Ohio, presented the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Board of Regents and Officers of the Smithsonian Institution, for their steady and effective efforts for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men, and particularly for the measures which they have adopted for the encouragement and promotion of the public libraries of our country; and we have great pleasure in looking to that institution as the central establishment of the United States for the furtherance of all such objects.

#### THE SMITHSONIAN CATALOGUE SYSTEM

Prof. JEWETT then proceeded to remark:

The catalogue system of which I intend to speak, is one of those enterprises which could not have been carried into operation except

under the protection and guidance of the Smithsonian Institution; nor can it be successful, unless it meets the hearty approval and co-operation of other libraries. I wish, therefore, to present the matter fully and explicitly to this Convention.

Few persons, except librarians, are aware of the nature and extent of the difficulties which have been encountered in attempting to furnish suitable printed catalogues of large and growing libraries; difficulties apparently insurmountable, and menacing a common abandonment of the hope of affording guides, so important, to the literary accumulation of the larger libraries of Europe.

While the catalogue of a large library is passing through the press, new books are received, the titles of which it is impossible, in the ordinary manner of printing, to incorporate with the body of the work. Recourse must then be had to a supplement. In no other way can the acquisitions of the library be made known to the public. If the number of supplements be multiplied, as they have been in the library of Congress, the student may be obliged to grope his weary way through ten catalogues, instead of one, in order to ascertain whether the book which he seeks be in the library. He cannot be certain, even then, that the book is not in the collection, for it may have been received since the last appendix was printed. Supplements soon become intolerable. The whole catalogue must then be re-arranged and re-printed. The expense of this process may be borne so long as the library is small, but it soon becomes burdensome, and, ere long, insupportable, even to national establishments.

There is but one course left — not to print at all. To this no scholar consents, except from necessity. But to this alternative, grievous as it is, nearly all the large libraries of Europe have been reluctantly driven.

More than a century has passed, since the printing of the catalogue of the Royal Library at Paris was commenced. It is not yet finished. No one feels in it the interest which he would, if he could hope to have its completeness sustained, when once brought up to a given date.

Not one European library, of the first class, has a complete printed catalogue, in a single work. The Bodleian Library is not an exception. It may be necessary to search six distinct catalogues, in order to ascertain whether any specified book was or was not in that collection, at the close of the year 1847.

This is, surely, a disheartening state of things. It has been felt

and lamented by every one who has had the care of an increasing library.

As a remedy for this evil, it is proposed to stereotype the titles separately, and to preserve the plates or blocks in alphabetical order of the titles, so as to be able readily to insert additional titles, in their proper places, and then to reprint the whole catalogue. By these means, the chief cost of republication (that of composition) together with the trouble of revision and correction of the press, would, except for new titles, be avoided. Some of the great difficulties which have so long oppressed and discouraged librarians, and involved libraries in enormous expenses, may thus be overcome.

The peculiar position of the Smithsonian Institution suggested the application of this plan, on a wider scale, and for a more important purpose, than that of merely facilitating the publication of new and complete editions of separate catalogues.

It had been proposed to form a general catalogue of all the books in the country, with reference to the libraries where each might be found. The plan of stereotyping titles separately, suggested the following system for the accomplishment of this important purpose:

1. The Smithsonian Institution to publish rules for the preparation of Catalogues.
2. Other institutions, intending to publish catalogues of their books, to be requested to prepare them in accordance with these rules, with a view to their being stereotyped under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution.
3. The Smithsonian Institution to pay the whole extra expense of stereotyping, or such part thereof as may be agreed upon.
4. The stereotyped titles to remain the property of the Smithsonian Institution.
5. Every library acceding to this plan, to have the right of using all the titles in the possession of the Institution, as often as desired, for the printing of its own catalogue by the Smithsonian Institution, paying only the expense of making up the pages, of press-work, and of distributing the titles to their proper places.
6. The Smithsonian Institution to publish as soon as possible, and at stated intervals, a General Catalogue of all Libraries coming into this system.

I have already presented to members of the Convention copies of an unfinished work entitled the "Smithsonian Catalogue System." It contains: 1. A detailed account of the system; 2. Rules for the

preparation of Catalogues; 3. Examples illustrating the rules. As to the first two matters, the work is complete. It was intended to print as examples the titles of all the works, in the department of bibliography and literary history, in the Smithsonian Library. These titles, to the number of one thousand, are stereotyped and ready for use. The progress of the work was interrupted by the sickness and absence of two of the men on whom we relied. I have been able to print off a few copies, by using the type for the last form of the rules instead of the stereotype plates as in the rest of the book, by limiting the number of examples and omitting the indexes. I hope in a few weeks to be able to finish this book, and to present it through the Smithsonian Institution to the public, as the first detailed publication of the system. About three years ago I read a paper on the subject before the American Scientific Association. I did not present the matter before the public, till the practicability of stereotyping by separate titles had been demonstrated. Practical stereotypers had said that it could not be done. But the perseverance and ingenuity of a gentleman now present, the Rev. Mr. Hale, of Worcester, showed that it could be done by the electrotype process, and even by the common stereotype process. This point once proved, we sought the *best* method of executing the work. About this time, Mr. Josiah Warren, of Indiana, called our attention to the new process and material for stereotyping which he had patented. We gave them a thorough trial, and at last adopted them. We have done much to perfect the process, and we are now ready to show to experts in practical printing the results which we have attained. The perfecting of this mode of stereotyping, the adaptation of it to our purposes, and the arrangement of the practical details for the great work upon which we are commencing, have consumed much time and demanded great labor. The mechanical difficulties which we have had to meet and overcome will be appreciated by printers and stereotypers. The bibliographical difficulties will be fully understood by librarians. As soon as the practicability of the system had been established, as fully as it could possibly be, before its actual application on a large scale, and the value of it to the world of learning had been considered and proclaimed by a commission of the most competent men to whom the subject was referred by the Smithsonian Institution, the matter was presented to the Joint Library Committee of Congress. They considered it fully, and in the most liberal spirit, and finally recommended to Congress an appropriation for the cataloguing of its li-

brary upon this plan. This appropriation was readily granted. It is sufficient to enable us to prosecute the work till next December or January. It is not enough to finish the catalogue, but it is all that was asked for. We wish to proceed cautiously — demonstrating, step by step, the practicability and usefulness of our operations. The work on the catalogue of the Library of Congress is now in progress. The system is therefore in actual operation.

The title of every book and of each distinct edition is stereotyped upon a separate plate. The author's name also stands by itself. Each plate shows at a glance the heading to which it belongs. It is obvious that these plates may be placed together in alphabetical or other order, as may be desired. They are mounted on blocks, for printing like other stereotype plates. The great ends to be gained are:

1. To avoid the necessity of preparing, composing, and correcting anew the titles once printed, when the Library has received accessions, or the alternative of printing the titles of these accessions in supplements, which are very inconvenient appendages.

2. To prevent the repetition of the work of preparation of titles, composition and correction of press, for copies of the same book in different libraries. The title once prepared and stereotyped, remains at the Smithsonian Institution, to be used by any Library having the same book.

3. To secure uniformity in the construction of catalogues, thus greatly facilitating the researches of the student.

It is obvious that the cost of the first catalogue will be greater than if it were not stereotyped. The work of preparation will also be more expensive. But the additional cost of the first edition will be more than saved in the first reprinting of the whole catalogue. It will be further understood that the sum paid by the first Library is not only for its own benefit, but for that of every other Library hereafter adopting the plan, so far as its books are the same. Congress is therefore now conferring a great boon upon other Libraries, while at the same time it is taking the course, in the end most economical, for the construction of the catalogues of its own library. There will also be a great saving of the expense of paper and press-work under this system. It is customary now to print off a larger number of copies of every catalogue than are immediately wanted, because it cannot be known how many may be required before the catalogue can be reprinted. On this plan, when a new edition, with all additions

incorporated, can be had at any time, it will not be thought necessary to print more copies than enough to meet the immediate demand.

It should be mentioned as one of the most important advantages of this system, that it affords the means of attaining great accuracy in the catalogues. Every effort will be made to secure accuracy in the first instance. Librarians will not, however, be surprised to find numerous errors. This system offers the best means of detecting and correcting these errors. Every time that a title is used for a new catalogue, it must be very carefully compared with the book itself. Every mistake and variation will be reported in a friendly spirit, and immediately corrected. The catalogue will thus be constantly undergoing a process of verification and improvement.

Upon all these topics I have dwelt more fully and systematically in the pamphlet to which I have alluded. It may not be amiss for me to notice one or two objections which may occur to the minds of practical printers against the use of these stereotype plates. One is, that the plates, being used so often, will become worn, and that when new plates are inserted, the difference between the new and old plates will be observable on the printed sheets.

To this objection I can say in reply: First, the number of copies required for each catalogue would be so small that it would be many years before there would be any noticeable difference between the old and new plates, were they made from common type metal. But, secondly, the material which we employ is harder than type metal, and resists much longer the wear of the press. I presume that a run of 100,000 copies would not make any observable difference between the old plates and the new.

Another difficulty which may suggest itself to some, is in keeping the register and preserving the uniform length of pages. The register, so far as the top and sides of the page are concerned, can be kept most perfectly. Variations in the length of the pages cannot be entirely avoided. But if some pages be longer or shorter by three or four lines, it is not a very serious matter. It may offend a printer's eye, but would not be noticed by the general reader. I may remark, however, that there are several ways of reducing the inequalities. Very long titles may be stereotyped in two or three pieces. The titles on a short page may be spread apart, making the matter a little more open and thus elongating the page. The catalogue may be printed in double-column folio. This size is preferable for a

catalogue on other accounts. It presents more titles to the eye at once, and it also saves paper.

I would not be understood as insisting upon the catalogue being in folio, nor, indeed, upon its being alphabetical. These are matters not essential to the system. Each librarian can choose for himself; the system possessing this great advantage, that it is equally applicable to the folio, quarto, or octavo size; to alphabetical and to classed catalogues.

There is one other point which may be noticed. This kind of catalogue is not recommended for all purposes for which a catalogue or list of books may be desirable. It is proposed as the standard catalogue for reference in every library containing works of permanent value. It is proposed as the basis for all other apparatus, such as indexes, shelf-lists, "finding catalogues," or short title catalogues, which it may be thought that the peculiar circumstances of any library or every library require. From this catalogue all others may easily be made. This is supposed to be, in general, the first and most important of all the means for rendering a library serviceable to all classes of persons who may consult it.

With respect to the rules for preparing catalogues, it may be proper to make a few explanatory remarks. They were formed after a careful study of those adopted for the preparation of the catalogue of the British Museum. They were examined and discussed in detail by the catalogue commission appointed by the Smithsonian Institution. They have been carefully revised to meet exigencies which have occurred in the practical application of them. That they are perfect and all-sufficient, is not, indeed, to be supposed. On many points there would be a difference of opinion. An effort has been earnestly and honestly made to frame the best possible code. But whether it be absolutely the best or not, the great desideratum of uniformity will be attained by the adoption of it.

The practical operation of the rules has been considered, no less than the theoretical perfection of the catalogue. It is necessary to frame such rules as we may reasonably expect to be able to follow. I would gladly have required that the number of pages of every book (distinguishing those of prefatory and appended matter) and the names of publishers should in all cases be given. But these would require much additional time and labor, and would considerably increase the bulk of the catalogue. It was thought best, therefore, to omit them. We must endeavor to make the catalogue accurate so far



as it goes. The examination of the book should be thorough. Additional particulars may hereafter be added in the form of notes, without disturbing the work first done.

The work upon which we have entered is not the work of a day, nor of a year. It demands long-continued, patient labor. Should it be successful, as we have every reason to hope that it will be, its best results will be realized after we have ceased from our labors. But its immediate results will amply reward our efforts. Some of them are now almost attained. The catalogue of the Library of Congress will, it is hoped, be a valuable gift to the bibliographical world. To the list now nearly ready for publication, of the books in the department of bibliography and literary history, belonging to the Smithsonian Library, it will be easy to add those in other libraries not already catalogued. We can then present to librarians a complete catalogue of the bibliographical apparatus to be found in the country. Catalogues of books in other branches of knowledge are now in preparation. As we thus proceed from library to library, and from one department of learning to another, each work will be complete and useful in itself, while it constitutes a finished portion of the general catalogue.

At the conclusion of these remarks, Mr. Folsom presented the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That we have considered attentively the plan for constructing catalogues of libraries, and a general catalogue of the public libraries of the United States, by means of stereotyped titles, proposed and developed by the Smithsonian Institution. That we regard it as an object of high importance to the interests of our public libraries, and to the promotion of learning, and worthy to share in the funds of the institution, and the zealous exertions of its officers; the more so as it is an enterprise which cannot be successfully prosecuted except under the protection, guidance and pecuniary support of this central establishment, for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.

*Resolved*, That we have learned with pleasure that Congress, on the recommendation of the Library Committee, made an appropriation for the practical testing of the plan in its application to the Library of Congress, and that the work is now in successful progress.

*Resolved*, That, as practical librarians and bibliographers, we take pride and satisfaction in the fact that a measure of so great literary utility has received the prompt and efficient support of our national

legislature, and we would express the earnest hope that this support be extended to it liberally till its first great results, in the complete stereotyped catalogue of the Library of Congress, shall be attained.

Mr. SMITH, of Philadelphia, said he had investigated Prof. Jewett's plan with considerable interest, and could heartily favor the resolutions. He thought the catalogue of the British Museum even might be completed, and thereby the scholars of the world be greatly benefited, by following this system. He thought the result of this experiment would be one grand catalogue of all the libraries of the United States.

Mr. HAVEN, of Worcester, said he thought the resolutions should contain some intimation that the idea was purely American in its inception and perfection.

Mr. FOLSOM said the intent of the resolutions was to stamp it as American.

The propriety of stating more clearly the fact, that the invention of separate stereotyped titles was purely American, was advocated by Mr. Haven, Prof. Greene, and others.

Prof. JEWETT said that within the last few months he had heard that a claim for this invention had been set up in France, by the Chevalier de La Garde, an employee of the National Library. After the speech he [Mr. J.] delivered before the American Scientific Association, M. de la Garde published a letter in the *Moniteur*, in which he stated that he had formed a similar plan eighteen years previous, that he had published an account of it in 1845, and that he had endeavored to secure its adoption. The plan of the Chevalier de la Garde differed in many respects from his own, but still it contained the idea of separate stereotype titles. Mr. J. stated still further, that this claim was entirely unknown to him until long after he had fully matured and had proposed his own system. He had never heard of such a proposition from any source, till after he

had suggested it. He certainly hoped that full justice would be done to any earlier efforts than his own which may have been made in this direction.

Mr. HAVEN remarked, that in every great discovery there was always found a number of men who laid claim to be the originators, but it was universally admitted that he who carried a discovery to its successful application was the one entitled to the credit as inventor.

Mr. FOLSOM said that the idea had struck him thirty years ago, and therefore he had a better claim than the French gentleman. Neither claim amounted to anything. The idea had produced nothing practical and useful. He would say, however, that though he had had the idea, when Prof. Jewett mentioned it to him he said that its practical development was "impossible."

Mr. GUILD, of Providence, said he had at first entertained serious doubts as to the practicability of the system. Those doubts were now entirely removed, and he hoped the time would soon come when every library in the land would have its catalogue made out by means of separate stereotyped titles.

The first resolution was then amended as follows:

*Resolved*, That we have considered attentively the plan for constructing catalogues of libraries, and a general catalogue of the public libraries of the United States, by means of separate stereotyped titles, *originated and proposed by Prof. C. C. Jewett*, and developed by *him while librarian of the Smithsonian Institution*, etc.

The three resolutions, as thus amended, were then unanimously adopted.

Mr. VINTON, of St. Louis, then presented the following:

*Resolved*, That a Committee of three be appointed by this Convention, to prepare a history of the invention of applying movable stereotype plates to the printing of separate titles in a catalogue; and that their report be embodied in a written memorial, to be presented at the

next annual session of this Convention, in order that it may be printed at the expense of the Convention.

The resolution was carried unanimously — and Mr. Folsom, of Boston, Mr. Guild, of Providence, and Rev. Mr. Hale, of Worcester, were appointed that Committee.

#### CENTRAL NATIONAL LIBRARY

Mr. FOLSOM offered the following resolutions, which were adopted unanimously:

*Resolved*, That the establishment of a great central library for reference and research, while it is demanded by the condition of the United States as to general civilization and intellectual advancement, is especially interesting to this Convention from the bearing it would have upon libraries throughout the country.

*Resolved*, That we deem such an establishment as being eminently worthy of support from the national treasury, and that in no way can the government better promote the progress of learning through the whole country, than by placing a central national library under the administration of the Smithsonian Institution.

#### POPULAR LIBRARIES

The importance of popular libraries in every part of our country, was introduced by Rev. S. Osgood, of New York, in the following remarks:

I suppose, Mr. President, that no business is at present formally before the Convention, and that it is in order now for any member to suggest topics of interest for the consideration of the Committee just chosen. I hardly feel entitled to speak at this early stage of the proceedings, yet there may be something in my position, as a delegate and not a librarian, which will allow me to speak of your valuable profession, as one of yourselves, which you, with your characteristic professional modesty, could not do. When I first saw the call for this Convntion in the newspapers, the idea struck me as a capital one, especially from its probable influence upon the public spirit of the country, as well as upon the fellow-feeling of librarians as a professional class. I little expected, however, to take any part in your proceedings, until being surprised by an appointment from the Provi-

dence Athenæum to represent its interest here, and thus renew with that noble institution a relation so much valued years ago. It is proper, therefore, for me to make some suggestions touching the welfare of our popular class of libraries, as representing an institution so prominent among them, and already numbering nearly twenty thousand volumes of the choicest books within its possession.

May I not, however, say a word of congratulation at the appearance of things thus far in your assembly. It is good to be here with so large a class of men, so useful and laborious in one of the most important callings on earth—the keepers and the choosers of the aliment that nurtures the mental life of the nation. Every man is better for honoring his vocation, and I hope that it will be one of the results of your deliberations to make you think more highly of your work, and to bring to its labors a more cordial *esprit du corps*. The profession to which I belong owes an especial debt of gratitude to yours, so dependent are we, in all our more advanced states, upon the treasures of which you are the custodians. I surely never felt more disposed to acknowledge the obligation than now, when addressing a chair occupied by one who has done such eminent service to the library cause in this country. Some ten years since how we rejoiced in your return to the city of Providence, from your European tour, backed by a force of some ten thousand volumes of the choicest ancient and modern literature, to double the library of Brown University, and to multiply the resources of my earnest scholars, more abounding in the spirit than in the apparatus of liberal study. Much is said of the power of foreign immigration, and often the most startling statistics disclose the new elements of hope and peril that are landed every year upon our shores. Such immigration as you have promoted is all hopeful, and in nothing perilous. A blessing upon such arrivals of thousands of authors embodied in their books, and not a single shabby fellow among them all. What a great subject this matter of selecting and diffusing of books opens upon us! How much light would be thrown upon the inner life of the nation, if we could only trace the influence of good books as they make their noiseless progress throughout the land, spreading so much light, quickening so much energy, checking so much, and beguiling so much pain and sorrow! Honor to this movement that aims to help on the good cause. Too many bad books make their stealthy advances, that need to be tracked to their dens, even as the pestilence that walketh in darkness needs to be hunted to its hiding-place. Honor to every man who circulates

two good books where only one circulated before. Remember Milton's noble words:—"As good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature—God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God as it were in the eye."

I should be very glad at the fitting time to say my poor word in behalf of the highest class of public libraries, and of the need of bringing them up to a more adequate standard. Proud as we are of our four or five great libraries, there is not one of them, not even that of Harvard University, my own cherished Alma Mater, that affords the requisite means for the thorough study of any one topic of recondite learning, even, if of practical science. Any scholar who tries to investigate any ancient or historical subject will find, to his regret, that no library in the country has a plummet that can sound its depths. What facilities the noble Astor Library may afford, we can judge better when its merits are known and its treasures are consolidated.

There is no reason for being down-hearted at this state of things, for we cannot expect soon to rival the great libraries of Europe, and our present task is rather with the increase and improvement of libraries for the people, than with great central institutions such as the wealth of centuries only can endow. As the mass of the people obtain a higher culture by means at hand in every town and city, the demand for the highest class of books will increase, and the hope of national collections will brighten. Now, what shall prevent our America from leading all nations of the earth *longo intervallo* in the number and value of our Popular Institutes and Athenæums? We are probably not much behind, if at all behind, any portion of Europe in the number of books collected in our villages, and available to the community at large. But not a tithe of the progress has been made that should have been made. What prevents every community of a thousand inhabitants from having its well-chosen library of a thousand volumes? And if this ratio were to be carried out in all our towns, how vast would be the increase and how noble the triumph of a sound popular literature! May not this Convention do something, by its discussions and action, to call attention to this matter, and rouse many a slumbering township to its imperative duty? Who shall presume to estimate adequately the advantages coming from the establishment of a good library in a community not before

so favored? The immediate vicinity and the whole nation share in the benefit.

Many a thriving town needs some such centre of generous and elevating interest as an attractive library must be, and it should be considered but half civilized until such a centre is established. It should be one of the first things to be pointed out to the traveler in new regions. When in distant places, we yearn for some familiar objects, and we feel at once at home when we hear the pleasant church bells, and see the goodly company of stout men, fair women and sprightly children on their way to the sanctuary. How this home feeling is deepened when we enter some neat and well-filled library, and look upon the array of good authors open to the perusal of the people, and feel a new sense even of humane and religious fellowship, as we think of the grand intellectual catholicity that unites the whole civilized world in the same literary allegiance. The village library attracts to itself every congenial ally, and tends to diffuse social refinement as well as intellectual light. The Lyceum, often suggested by the tastes formed by reading, repays the debt by popular lectures, whose proceeds often pay the expense of new books, and there is no more cheering view of our Young America than that afforded by the thousands and tens of thousands of young men, of generous and inquiring minds, who gather around the popular institute, with its library and courses of lectures.

This Convention will not meet in vain, if it shall give the incentive to form one new institution of the kind anywhere in the land. Every such library tends to foster a worthy public spirit among citizens of ample means. Many a successful merchant of the city, who has thriven largely in some "sugar trade or cotton line," and who abounds far more in generous impulses than literary attainments, would rejoice to send to his native town or village some choice work of art, or valuable selection of books, as a token of kindly remembrance, if an institution existed that should suggest the hint and indicate the method to the benefactor. It will be found that every well organized popular library has been much enriched by such donations, none more so than that which I now represent, that Athenæum so nobly endowed by the heirs of Ives, so strengthened by the bequest of Butler, and favored every year by the generosity of men less abounding in wealth, yet not less wanting in the right spirit.

The whole country grows by such institutions, for they at once

collect the local and fugitive literature, so important to the natural history, and they create a demand for the best class of books, securing of themselves an encouraging market for a good sized edition of every work of undoubted value. I call your attention seriously to the value of such enterprises, and urge you to do something to extend and improve them. Following the report prepared by yourself, Mr. President, under the auspices of Congress, I find the number of libraries, of a public character, containing 1,000 volumes and upwards, to be only 423, and the aggregate number of volumes in the 694 libraries reported, exclusive of school libraries, to be 2,201,623. Now, sir, where is the town of any importance that should not at once have its thousand of good books circulating among its people, and what but the want of the true spirit shall prevent our two millions of volumes from swelling to twenty millions, nay, reaching before the year of the next census the full limit of our numerical population, although it may exceed thirty millions? Sir, with your leave, I offer the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That while we maintain most decidedly the importance of libraries of the highest class, in furtherance of the most advanced literary and scientific studies, and rejoice in the rise and progress of our few great collections of books for professional scholars, we are convinced that for the present our chief hope must be in the establishment and improvement of *popular* libraries throughout the land.

*Resolved*, That the Business Committee be requested to call attention to the desirableness of a popular Library Manual, which shall embody the most important information upon the chief points in question, especially upon —

1. The best organization of a Library society, in regard to its officers, laws, funds, and general regulations.

2. The best plans for Library edifices, and the arrangements of the shelves and books, with the requisite architectural drawings.

3. The most approved method of making out and printing catalogues.

4. The most desirable principle to be followed in the selection and purchase of books, as to authors and editions; with lists of such works as are best suited for libraries of various sizes, from 500 to 1,000 volumes or upwards.

*Resolved*, That the Business Committee be requested to consider the expediency of memorializing Congress to procure the preparation of such a Manual, through the agency of the Smithsonian Institution.



These resolutions were referred to the following committee, who are to take action upon them and report at the next meeting of the Convention; viz.: Rev. S. Osgood, Prof. C. C. Jewett, and Mr. R. A. Guild.

Subsequently, Rev. GORHAM D. ABBOTT presented the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the time has now arrived when the extension of well-selected public libraries, of 1,000, 5,000 and 10,000 volumes, throughout the towns and villages, the associations, the institutions, the schools of every kind in the United States, has become a matter of the greatest importance to the future welfare of our country.

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to report a digested plan for the promotion of this object at the next meeting of this Convention.

Mr. HALE seconded these resolutions, and hoped that some means might be found to carry out the principle. But he called the attention of his friend who moved it to the danger which lurked in every such plan; that, so soon as such a list of books was suggested, there started up a bookseller's job, and the benefit of the list was lost in the struggles of those who sought to be the only publishers who could supply the libraries. The School Boards of the various States have found this difficulty so incurable, that they have refrained from suggesting any list of school books as an official list to be followed. There was, too, always, in every town, some peculiar want to be satisfied, which no general list could meet.

He took the opportunity presented in this resolution, to attempt some definition as to the real character of a "popular library:" the words had been frequently used in the sessions of the Convention, but needed more accuracy in their use than, out of the Convention, they always gained. In fact, there were two distinct meanings of the word "popular," and it is to one of these only that the resolution of his friend referred, or his support of it. That is

“popular” which at the moment is attractive, as the play bills in the streets said Miss Julia Dean was a “popular” actress. That is “popular” in another sense, which is of real use to the whole people; and it is in this sense only that the resolution contemplates a popular library.

The great duty and the great difficulty of the trustees of popular libraries is, to keep them true to this sort of popularity, and to turn as sternly as possible from the temptation to buy books which are popular, only because at the moment attractive, for this last class of purchases becomes the most costly possible. In a few years, in a few months even, such books lose all their attraction, and the library has bought them at the highest price, to give them shelf-room afterwards, when they are worth really nothing at all. A circulating library sold at auction, is a good index of the worth, after a few years, of books “popular” in their day. Mr. H. illustrated this view of the change of value of books by one or two instances.

He then said, that the enterprise of the princely publishers of this city had relieved library purchasers of a great part of the difficulty in balancing the two “popularities.” That magnificent enterprise which has made books cheaper in America than in any country in the world, makes it so easy for every man to get hold of the cheap literature which is simply transitory in its character, that there is really no need now to accumulate that in a public library. At the same time, this very cheap literature, which, with all its dangers, and they are great, was still the greatest blessing to the training of this country, had created, and would still create, the popular appetite for books behind it, which the public library, if it was really popular, ought to supply. The youngster who had bought for a shilling the fascinating account of the Russian Campaign, by Alexander Dumas, has a right to find in the pub-

lic library the more fascinating pages of the Count Segur, from which it is drawn. To-day, said Mr. Hale, the great literary question seems likely to be, whether Napoleon was the best, greatest, and most religious of men, or the worst, meanest, and least religious of men. Now, the young men and young women who are interested in that discussion, have a right to claim of a public library, that when they turn from Mr. Abbott's fascinating life of him in *Harper*, they shall find the only reading about him, which is more fascinating, in the details of his own dispatches, or the memoirs of his own generals. For the popular life which circulates a thousand copies in every large town, they need not look to the public library: for the materials to which it refers them they must look there; and they have a right to claim that they shall be found there. And this merit has the purchase of such books, that every year their value increases, while every year the value of books, which are simply the talk of the day, falls off till they are worth nothing at all.

The resolutions were adopted, and Messrs. Haven, of Worcester, Abbott, of New York, and Jewett, of Washington, appointed as the committee for reporting a plan at the next annual meeting.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

Mr. LLOYD P. SMITH, of Philadelphia, presented the following resolutions:

*Whereas*, The documents published by order of the Congress of the United States, are printed in large numbers at the public expense, and

*Whereas*, It is desirable that they should be so distributed as to be accessible for reference to all citizens, and at the same time preserved for posterity, therefore

*Resolved*, That a Committee of two be appointed to memorialize Congress, on behalf of this Convention, requesting the passage of a

joint resolution, granting to the Smithsonian Institution, for distribution among the principal Public Libraries throughout the United States, copies of all such Journals of Congress, Senate Documents, House Documents, Reports of Committees, and other State Papers as may hereafter be printed by order of Congress.

Mr. SMITH said it was necessary, with such an intelligent audience as that before him, to expatiate on the importance of the Public Documents and State Papers of the United States. They were constantly wanted for reference, not only by historians, but by lawyers, claimants on the Government, and citizens generally, seeking information. In a word, they are invaluable.

He would rather say a few words on the right which he conceived the Convention had, in its representative character, to call upon Congress so to distribute the Public Documents that they may be forever accessible to their constituents. These documents are printed at vast expense, which comes out of the pockets of the citizens generally. By the present mode of distribution to members of Congress and a few favored libraries only, they become, soon after publication, so scarce as to be practically useless, whereas, by the proposed distribution to the public libraries of the country, and for purposes of reference, (he presumed every library there represented was accessible to all civil gentlemen,) they would always be at hand for the use of those for whose benefit they were, in fact, printed. The Convention did not, therefore, by passing these resolutions, come before Congress in the attitude of beggars, but rather as demanding, respectfully, but firmly, for the people at large, their own.

Not that he would imply that there was, on the part of Congress, the slightest indisposition to do what in it lay for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." On the contrary, the facts just mentioned by the Librarian of the

Smithsonian Institution, not to speak of the munificent appropriation of something like \$150,000 for a work which, it was supposed, would be a history of the Indian Tribes, showed that Congress was not indifferent to the claims of learning. But there was a natural and proper dread of jobbery and corruption in making these appropriations. In the case just mentioned the money had better have been thrown into the Potomac than that the Government should be disgraced. How much better had the \$150,000 been spent in building, on the foundation of the Congress Library, or that of the Smithsonian Institution, a great National Library, which should be for this country what the British Museum, the Bibliotheque du Roi, the Royal Library of Berlin, and other national institutions are for the scholars of the old world. And this led him to speak of the plan of distribution which, by these resolutions, was recommended to the wisdom of Congress. If a list of libraries was recommended by this Convention to the favor of Congress, those Senators and Representatives whose constituents were not included, would either oppose the resolutions, or, by adding amendment after amendment, endanger their passage; or if they should be passed, no provision would be made for libraries hereafter to be founded. No objection, he thought, could be made in any quarter, to handing over, every session, say at least 300 copies of all Public Documents to the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, to be, at their discretion, distributed to such libraries as would be likely to use them for the greatest benefit of the country.

Mr. HALE was very glad to see this subject brought up. He looked upon it as the most important subject that could be brought before them. The government of the United States did more for the encouragement of Literature than any government of the world, but still, through some mis-

take at Washington, the documents printed at the public expense were not circulated as generally as they ought to be. A complete collection of all the public documents of the United States could not now be found anywhere.

The above resolutions were unanimously adopted. Messrs. Smith, of Philadelphia, and Folsom, of Boston, were appointed the Committee.

The president also was subsequently added.

Mr. WALLACE, of Philadelphia, offered the following resolutions, which he introduced with a few appropriate remarks. The resolutions were unanimously passed:

*Resolved*, As a sense of this Convention, that the completeness of public law libraries throughout the country, and the interest of American jurisprudence, would be promoted by having, in each incorporated or public law library of the United States, a complete set of the *Statutes at large* of every State of the Union, in their original and unabridged condition. And that, as these volumes appear only from year to year, as they are not often on sale by law booksellers, nor easily procured from year to year by application, therefore, that this Convention respectfully suggests to the Governors, Secretaries of State, Legislatures or other public authorities having power to distribute these volumes, to make some permanent orders for transmitting to the Smithsonian Institution, at Washington, for distribution to the library of the Law Association at Philadelphia, and to the other public or incorporated law libraries throughout the United States, a certain number of copies of their statute laws, as published from year to year by the Legislatures of the respective States, in the original and unabridged condition.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Law Association of Philadelphia, be requested, with leave of that body, to transmit a copy of this resolution to the respective Governors and Secretaries of State throughout the Union, with any remarks he may see proper to make on the subject.

The following, which was presented by Mr. GUILD, was also adopted:

*Resolved*, That the members of this Convention cordially recommend the mutual interchange, so far as may be practicable, of the printed catalogues of all our public libraries.

## INDEXES TO AMERICAN LITERATURE

Mr. EDWIN WILLIAMS presented the following plan for an Index to American Newspapers:

*Proposed Index of American Newspapers, and Chronology of Important Events for the last 125 years*

The undersigned, as a member of the New York Historical Society, brought before one of the regular meetings of that institution a proposal, for causing to be made an index of the principal American newspapers on their files, extending over a period of one hundred and twenty-five years, in so many serial volumes. The proposal was favorably received by the Society, and referred to a special committee, of which the undersigned is chairman, with power to carry the same into effect; and he desires an expression of the opinion of this Convention on the subject, believing that it is important to the interests of Historical Literature, as it must open new sources of information, particularly to those engaged in researches either for literary or business purposes.

The plan proposes an index and chronological arrangement of the most important matters relative to American history, which may be found in the newspapers in the library of the Historical Society, principally those published in the city of New York, commencing in or about the year 1728, and continued to the present year; the index to include also the volumes of the *National Intelligencer*, which has been published at the city of Washington for the last half century. It might also embrace the volumes of *Niles' Register*, published in Baltimore, from 1811 to 1849, to which there is a semi-annual but no general index, except for the first twelve volumes.

The proposed index would probably comprise two octavo volumes of about one thousand pages, arranged on the plan of Holmes' *American Annals*, which comprise two volumes of chronology, from 1492 to 1826. Five or more persons could be employed in the work of preparing the index, under the auspices of the committee of the New York Historical Society, and the time required need not exceed two years. The Society would then publish the work in two volumes, in an edition of one thousand or one thousand five hundred copies. The total expense is estimated at ten thousand dollars; one-half for the preparation, and one-half for printing and binding.

To provide for the payment of the expense, it is proposed to obtain two hundred subscribers, at fifty dollars each, and the volumes, when

published, to belong to the subscribers, each receiving five copies of the work for his share of fifty dollars. EDWIN WILLIAMS.

Mr. HAVEN presented the following resolution in relation to this subject, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That this Convention approve the plan of the proposed index and chronology of American newspapers, belonging to the New York Historical Society, on the plan submitted by Edwin Williams, and referred, for the purpose of being carried out, to a special committee of that Society, and that we recommend the proposition to the favorable consideration and support of the friends of literature throughout the United States, particularly to libraries and other literary institutions.

## II

A copy of a new index to the Periodical Literature of England and America was exhibited to the Convention, and, on motion of Mr. Folsom it was unanimously

*Resolved*, That we have examined the work entitled "Index to Periodicals," by W. F. Poole, Librarian of the Mercantile Library of Boston, and that we approve of its plan and execution, and we recommend that a similar system of indexing be extended to the transactions and memoirs of learned societies.

The following plan for a Catalogue of Standard Works relating to America was presented by Mr. DISTURNELL, and referred to the Business Committee:

STANDARD WORKS ON AMERICA, showing its History, Geography, and Statistics.

Also, a *Catalogue of Works* relating to *American History, Geography, and Statistics* of Population, Emigration, Agriculture, Commerce, Manufactures, Internal Improvements, Minerals, Coinage, and Banking.

The *Historical and Geographical Works*, including Maps and Charts, to date from the first discovery of America, by Columbus, to the present time. The *Statistical Works* to date from the first enumeration of the population of the United States, in 1790 or 1800, to the present period. "*Statistics*," although of modern date, the subject having first been brought forward and matured by Sir John Sinclair, of Scotland,



during the last half and first part of the present century, is no doubt destined to become one of the most important sciences for the advancement of the human race. Enough is already known, from official and reliable statements, to form correct conclusions in regard to the working of different systems, whether relating to governments or domestic relations. Everything that can be numbered, weighed, or measured can be made the subject of minute inquiry and careful registry. What were formerly considered pure accidents, and so exempt from close examination, or beneath notice, have been shown, under the statistician's arrangement, to be the products of general laws, and to have a real and systematic bearing upon the welfare of man.

As the *Science of Statistics* is of so recent date, it is necessary to unite History and Geography in order to make the chain of knowledge perfect from the first discovery of the American continent, or its islands, in 1492, to the present period.

A complete list of *Standard Works* on information relating to the above kindred subjects, with the date of first publication, whether in bound volumes, manuscripts, public documents, pamphlets, or separate articles in magazines, &c., giving the names of compilers and authorities as far as possible, would afford great assistance to the seeker after *useful knowledge*, aid in the formation of private and public libraries, and thus be a lasting benefit to the present and future generations.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF WORKS INTO CATALOGUES

##### I

The following letter from M. Merlin, of Paris, was presented to the Convention by Mr. C. B. Norton:

PARIS, 29th August, 1853.

DEAR SIR—In promising to send to your Convention a slight bibliographical offering, I felt that I have not consulted my strength nor my time, and I must beg you to judge indulgently of these pages, traced in haste, and with the sole desire of expressing to you, as well as to the learned gentlemen who will assemble, my sympathy with their efforts.

I am happy to learn that one of the questions likely to be proposed at your bibliographical meeting is, the choice of some plan of classification proper to be adopted by the Libraries of the United States. Having been long impressed with the insufficiency of the different

methods in use or proposed, I have made this important question the object of my study, and I have in press, at the Imperial Printing Office, a work in which, after having reviewed, analyzed, and estimated all that has been done up to the present time, especially in France, I now propose a new method, and give you herewith its principal points. I have already made use of this system of classification in several catalogues. That of the rich library of the celebrated Orientalist, Sylvestre de Sacy, edited by me, in 3 vols., 8vo, Paris, 1843 to 1847, shows the application of my system, and has some explanations in the preface.

In my opinion every systematic bibliographical classification should be based upon the logical classification of the sciences. I have therefore sought, in the first place, for the most natural order of arranging the different branches of human knowledge, independently of all application to bibliography, and it is from that order that I have deduced my bibliographical system.

It is very difficult, I am aware, to judge correctly of a system from these detached portions. Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to transcribe for you some passages from my forthcoming work, which I think will give you an insight into my plan. If there are any obscure or doubtful passages, I trust that they will be explained by the work itself on its appearance.

“According to my views, a system of bibliographical classification is a logical chain of great classes and their subdivisions, whose formation and order are the result of a few principles, which serve as a base to the system. The great object of bibliographical classification is to assist the memory, by presenting information which will facilitate the inquirer in his search after books that he already knows exist, and impart to him information concerning those with which he is unacquainted. This is almost the same as presenting the literary history of each science in a synoptical form. This result can only be attained by bringing together all the works that treat on the same subject, and by arranging them in such order that the mind shall pass naturally from each subject to that which should follow or precede it; and in this way the place where any subject is found will be a sort of definition of its nature, and its distinctive characteristics. . . It is from this double operation, that is to say, from the bringing together similar subjects in their special groups, and determining the order which should be given to these groups, that their logical connection

will be made manifest, and great assistance be given to the memory and mind. . .

“But in order that this logical connection shall really assist the memory and the mind, it must be easy to comprehend and bear in mind the principles according to which the subjects have been brought together, and their order determined. . .

“If principles are adopted from merely abstract considerations, the classification will fail of accomplishing its end; it will be intelligible only to the minds of the few, and the best memory will fail to retain it. . .

“If, on the contrary, the divisions are taken from the nature of the objects to be classified, and their order is based upon those great laws of nature which may be daily noted, the system will become intelligible to all, and every one's memory will be assisted.

*General Classification of the Sciences, independent of Bibliography*

“Therefore the Sciences have been generally classified according to arbitrary or metaphysical considerations, as that of the progress of the Sciences, their comparative value, the relation which they bear to each other, their various applications, the nature of the moral faculties, the sources of human knowledge. . .

“Throwing aside these abstract considerations, I would rest upon principles which I consider less subject to discussion and more easy to be understood. . .

“According to my view, the first element of scientific classification should be taken from the subjects treated. Compare the Sciences with each other, and you will not fail to see that the most certain and the most unchangeable characteristic which distinguishes one from the other is the subject itself, and their position is, therefore, to be decided upon according to the nature of the subject treated. It is from this subject that they almost always take their name; but the same subject may be considered under different views, and may thus give rise to several Sciences connected with each other by the identity of the subject, but distinct according to the point of view from which each is considered. . .

“Thence result two principal and distinct things to be considered; first, the general subject, which will serve to separate these Sciences into groups; second, the point of view which will distinguish the Sciences of each group from one another. . .

“The subject has given us the distinctive character, according to

which our divisions will be formed; it will also give us the order of these divisions. Since each group of Sciences represents a special subject, it is evident that the order of these groups should be modeled from the subjects which they represent. . .

“Notwithstanding the indefinite variety of the subjects of human knowledge, all are material things, or are connected with material things by ties more or less direct, more or less intimate. If, then, we can find the most natural order for the productions of Creation, we shall have found the most natural order for the subjects of human knowledge, and, consequently, for human knowledge itself. . . It is not difficult to discover this order; it is seen by us at all times; it is that which the Creator himself has traced in his works, by graduating with such admirable regularity the organization of all beings, from the stone up to man.

“I would accordingly classify human knowledge by the objects of which it treats, either directly or indirectly, all arranged in the organic scale of being, and graduate this scale according to the chronological order of creation; that is to say, rising from the most simple to the most perfect.

“As to the subjects which treat of intellectual abstractions, of the moral world, or considerations of the social state, we shall see, by what follows, how they take their place in the outline that I have just traced.

“I will proceed by analysis, showing the whole before the sections, the entire plan before the details, things in general before those in particular.

#### *Great Divisions*

“In the universality of beings we see, as a first division, on one side the Creator, on the other the Creation. All the ideas that relate to God, to whatever opinion or religion they may belong, will form a principal group, that I shall designate by the title of THEOLOGICAL SCIENCES.

“The Sciences and Arts which treat of the whole or any portion of those myriads of created beings, shall be comprised under the common title of COSMOLOGICAL SCIENCES.

“Since cause is before effect, the science which treats of God should be before all other sciences, and it would be so in my classification, without the principles of analytical exposition by which my system is arranged, and according to which every science which embraces several

objects ought to precede that which treats only of those objects. Now Theology has only God for its object, and there is another science which treats of God and the Creation, that is PHILOSOPHY; not Psychology, which only describes the human soul, not Moral Philosophy, which lays down rules for social life, but Philosophy, as known to the Ancients, treating of first causes, of the Essence of Being, of the Creator and created things; in a word, embracing everything in an encyclopedic manner; Philosophy will then precede Theology, and after it will come the Sciences which relate to created things."

From this order spring three great divisions,

- I. PHILOSOPHY.
- II. THEOLOGICAL SCIENCES.
- III. COSMOLOGICAL SCIENCES.
  1. MATHEMATICAL SCIENCE.
  2. PHYSICAL            “
  3. ASTRONOMICAL     “
  4. GEOLOGICAL         “
  5. MINERALOGICAL    “
  6. PHYTOLOGICAL     “
  7. ZOOLOGICAL        “
  8. ANTHROPOLOGICAL “

As to the sciences which relate to Man, their division and order are not less simple or less natural. I consider Man under two heads, Individual Man and Man in Society. Individual man presents me with two divisions, Physical Man and Moral Man. Society also furnishes me with two divisions, the Social or Political Sciences and the Historical Sciences.

This is, sir, the outline of my classification of the Sciences without the Bibliographical application. This application changes nothing of importance, it only adds numerous subdivisions and another class, POLYGRAPHY

I should be very much honored if my method were judged by your learned librarians worthy of being applied to the literary collections which are made all over America. But, whatever may be the judgment passed upon it, I shall be always delighted, sir, with the circumstance which has procured for me the opportunity of making your acquaintance, and to prove to you the great respect with which I am,

Your very devoted servant,

R. MERLIN.

*Mr. Charles B. Norton.*

## II

A Paper on the Classified Index of the Catalogue of the Philadelphia Library Company, prepared for the Librarians' Convention, by LLOYD P. SMITH, Esq.:

GENTLEMEN: It has occurred to me that a short account of the manner of arranging and cataloguing the books of the Library Company of Philadelphia, might give rise to a discussion on those subjects which would be mutually instructive.

The Philadelphia Library has been in existence 121 years, and now numbers 65,000 vols. The books are arranged on the shelves according to a plan perhaps somewhat peculiar; that is, simply according to size. There are four sets of numbers, viz.: of folios, quartos, octavos, and duodecimos. This plan has some advantages as well as some disadvantages. It gives a neat and uniform appearance to the books as they stand on the shelves, and it makes it easy to ascertain at once whether a book is "in" or not. There is one exact spot where each volume ought to be; if it is not there it must be "out." It has the disadvantage that the works on the same subject are not together. This is, however, less important with us than in those libraries where the cases are open to the public or to members for inspection. The books in the Philadelphia Library are always kept under lock and key, the titles on the backs being, however, visible through the wires which protect them. When a book is wanted, the catalogue indicates the number and size, and, on the principle of "a place for everything and everything in its place," it is readily found.

It is obvious that, in our system, this strict dependence (where the librarian's memory is at fault) on the Catalogue makes a good one of the greatest importance.

When I took charge of the Library, in Jan., 1849, the state of the Catalogues was this:

All the books acquired by the Library before 1835 were included in one general Catalogue in two volumes. Those added from 1835 to 1844 were embraced in the First Supplement, and those from 1844 to 1849 in the Second Supplement.

The great Catalogue of 1835 was arranged, according to subjects, into the usual five grand divisions of Religion, Jurisprudence, Sciences and Arts, Belles Lettres, and History. These chief heads were subdivided with considerable minuteness, each subdivision being ar-

ranged alphabetically by authors' names, and anonymous books being placed at the end. Of the remarkable accuracy and judgment (indicating extensive acquirements in the compiler) with which the titles of books are classified in this Catalogue, I cannot forbear speaking. It is the work of George Campbell, Esq., from 1806 to 1829 the Librarian of the Institution, and still, I am happy to say, its Secretary.

"Thank God for the makers of dictionaries!" a pious Oxford student was overheard to ejaculate; and I think, gentlemen, those who use the collections under our care have reason to be equally grateful that there are such persons as the makers of catalogues.

But however admirable may be the arrangement of a Systematic Catalogue, it constantly happens that those who use it are at a loss under what head to look for a particular work. An alphabetical Index, therefore, especially of authors' names, becomes necessary; and such an Index, but partial and so incomplete as not to be depended on, was extemporised as the Catalogue of 1835 was going through the press, and added to it as an Appendix. The Supplements of 1844 and 1849 are totally destitute of such an index. To make sure that a book is not in the Philadelphia Library, it is necessary, therefore, to look through three Catalogues; and if, as constantly happens, it is doubtful under what head a book would fall, or, again, if the title of a book is known, but not the author's name, the search is a very tedious one, and sometimes hopeless.

To remedy these evils, I conceived the following plan, viz.: to consolidate the two Supplements, together with the MS. list of works added since 1849, into one Catalogue, classified like that of 1835, and to be called vol. 3, the paging to run on continuously from vol. 2, which itself follows that of vol. 1. It is not proposed to consolidate the whole into one complete Catalogue, on account of the expense, which would be about \$5,000. But most of the advantages of such a consolidation, together with some others not attainable by that process, will be secured by an alphabetical INDEX to the whole, on which I have been now more than two years engaged.

In making this Index the plan is, to take for a basis the present imperfect Index to the Catalogue of 1835, and going over each title again in that Catalogue.

I. To examine whether the author's name (if any) is already indexed, if not, to index it on a slip of paper, adding a short title of the book and the page of the Catalogue on which it is to be found.

II. To index the translators' and annotators' names.

III. To take the most important word or words of the title, and index it by them, as well as, in some cases, by some other word more likely to be referred to as the subject.

It will sometimes happen, therefore, that, on this plan, a book will be indexed five or six times, or even more: *e. g.*, "6,411, O. The Spy Unmasked; or, Memoirs of Enoch Crosby, alias Harvey Birch, comprising many interesting anecdotes never before published. By H. L. Barnum. New York, 1828."

This work (like *all* biography, poetry, and sermons) is not at present indexed at all. By the plan proposed it will be found under either of the following references:

	PAGE
Barnum, H. L. Spy Unmasked.....	924
Spy, Unmasked.....	924
Crosby, E., Memoirs of.....	924
Birch, H., Memoirs of.....	924

Again, take the following title:

"2,112, D. A History of Three of the Judges of King Charles the First, Major General Whalley, General Goffe, and Colonel Dixwell, who, at the restoration in 1660, fled to America, and were concealed in Massachusetts and Connecticut for near thirty years; with an account of Mr. Theophilus Whale, supposed also to have been one of the Judges. By President Stiles. Hartford, 1794."

Here, besides the proper names Stiles, Whalley, Goffe, Dixwell, and Whale, I would index the word *Regicides*, under which, though it does not occur on the title-page, the book is likely to be looked for.

In a word, my system amounts to a copious multiplication of cross references.

For using the Index, therefore, the following simple rule will be prefixed to it. "If the author's, translator's, or annotator's name is known, turn to it. If the title only of a book is known, and not the author's name, or if it is anonymous, turn to the most important word, preferring of two words equally important that which stands first in the title. Otherwise, turn to the subject.

"Having found a book in this Index, the number in the outer column indicates that page in the Catalogue, to which turn in order to find the full title of the work, together with its number and size, which latter indicates to the Librarian its position on the shelves."

I flatter myself that when this plan is carried out, the Library



Company of Philadelphia will possess a Catalogue unsurpassed for facility of reference by any in the world.

The labor of Indexing the larger Catalogue of 1835 is nearly completed. It remains to consolidate the titles of books added since 1835 into a third volume, classified on the same plan as vols. 1 and 2, to index this third vol., and finally to arrange the whole Index matter alphabetically to form an Appendix. Volume 3, therefore, and Index, will probably be published about January, 1855.

#### INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

The following communication, from Mons. Vattemare, was laid before the Convention by Mr. C. B. Norton:

PARIS, August 22, 1853.

DEAR SIR: I take this opportunity to send you the accompanying series of tables, submitted some months ago to the Emperor, and prepared by order of his majesty.

The whole of my system is there; its origin and progress, and the results obtained up to the year 1853.

But since these tables were presented to the Emperor, the Exchanges have considerably increased. Yet the above statement will give you an idea of what the result will be, the moment the system shall have been universally adopted and established upon a large and permanent basis; above all, when you consider what has been accomplished by so humble an individual as myself.

What I aim at is, the establishment of a regular and permanent system of exchange between governments, of not only the useless duplicates of their public libraries, but everything emanating from the genius of a nation, so as to form, in the Capitals of the civilized nations, public international libraries that would become a permanent exhibition of the intellectual power of each of them, a lasting World's Fair of the genius of nations. Hence, my constant and humble request has always been while addressing myself to the government of your noble country, "whenever you shall be in want of a European book, buy an American;" in Europe I make the same invitation. Let us have a central agency on each Continent, which shall be in connection with each other to negotiate these exchanges; let us have a monthly publication in English, French, and German, which shall publish the proceedings of the agency, and the titles of the books or objects exchanged, or to be exchanged. Would not such a plan power-

fully contribute to the diffusion of knowledge and international goodwill, and to the realization of the republic of letters, the peaceful confederation of republics, kingdoms, and empires? Could a greater assistance be given to the Book Trade than the adoption of such a plan?

The political events that have transpired since 1847, have brought a temporary prejudice to my system. On my return from America, I found the administration almost entirely renewed. I have had to do with officers entirely unacquainted with my mission, and uninterrupted changes and alterations in the different ministerial departments have rendered my task very difficult and extremely laborious. This is one only of the causes why the results have not been exactly what they promised to be when I left France for my mission to the United States; but a little patience, and things will take their proper course. The moment there shall be the slightest relaxation in the political excitement, attention will be immediately turned towards our system.

You know what Prince Napoleon said in your presence: that twice already he had had about our system a conversation with the Emperor, who told him that he appreciated the system most highly, and was only waiting for a moment of leisure to examine it thoroughly, and devise the means of realizing it.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Public Instruction, on the proposal of his colleague, the Minister of Public Works, has addressed a circular letter to the other members of the Cabinet, inviting them to form a kind of association to give to the system all the support it deserves. But before giving an official answer to this proposal, a general investigation is now taking place in all the departments, the public libraries, museums, &c., to ascertain what has already been received, and the results to be anticipated from the system.

The Minister of Public Instruction told me, some time ago, that this system would be of no value to the world, unless it be established upon a large scale; that, heretofore, all I had done, although very considerable, was a mere gleaning.

As for our American collection, you know, likewise, the opinion of Prince Napoleon, who considers it as "a great monument to the genius of a great people, and of its friendly feeling towards France," He thinks, also, that the place now ready to receive it, in the building of the Chamber of Commerce, is not becoming its importance, and he told me, in your presence, that he would himself see the new Prefect, to manage that matter with him to the honor of America and the

gratification of the public. The projected arrangement is to give to each State a certain number of alcoves or shelves, in accordance with its intellectual riches and liberality, each one severally distinguished with its coat of arms and date of incorporation.

As for the system, it is gaining ground rapidly in Europe. By a letter dated St. Petersburg, 29th July last, received the same day I had the pleasure of seeing you, His Excellency the Baron de Korff, Counsellor of State, and Director of the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, acknowledging the receipt of the Natural History of the State of New York, informs me that, after mature consideration, convinced of the important services our system of exchange is likely to render, he sends me the list of a series of most valuable duplicates of *incunabula* in the Imperial Library, to be placed at my disposal. The Danish Government has also presented, through its minister here, a list of splendid ancient works. The librarians of some of the celebrated Universities of Germany have made similar communications. I am waiting with the greatest anxiety for the official answer of the French administration, to be able to begin the publication of our Bulletin of international exchanges, to publish all those lists of most valuable works.

You have seen the fine series of ancient and modern books they were selecting for me at the Imperial Library. The little time you spent in my office was yet sufficient to give you an idea of what may be obtained from our system. You saw all the nations side by side, republicans and imperialists holding each other by the hand to help the realization of our great and peaceful Republic of Letters.

Let me close this letter by expressing my grateful acknowledgment towards the States and institutions of the Union, that have so readily and so nobly given a helping hand to my efforts, and tell them that, in my conviction, the time is not distant when they will reap the advantages of that generous and persevering support; that the little that has been done to this time is only the earnest of what is yet to come. As for the private individuals who have seconded my labors, the number is too great to mention them here, and they have already found in their conscience and patriotism the reward of their acts.

Yet allow me to mention one of them. I consider it to be my duty to name particularly, in order to express to him my sincerest gratitude for his constant and unrelaxed attention to our interests. I refer to Mr. E. Irving, of the Sample Office, New York. This gentleman, since my departure from America to the present time, has generously

devoted his time, energies, and labors as agent, to receive and transmit the objects exchanged between our two Continents, without receiving the slightest compensation.

I would feel most happy, dear sir, if the Convention of American Librarians should consider the tables here annexed worthy of their attention, and I will be very thankful to you, if you will be kind enough to communicate to me their opinion. Have the kindness to say to these learned gentlemen, how happy I would have been to have found myself among so many distinguished savants, many of whom have shown themselves so benevolent to me, and in a country whose generous and fraternal hospitality I shall never forget.

Remain assured, dear sir, of the sentiments of esteem and friendship of your devoted friend,  
ALEXANDRE VATTEMARE.  
*Mr. C. B. Norton.*

List of establishments which have participated in the benefits of the system of exchanges:

GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN

University of Heidelberg.

BELGIUM

All the Ministerial Departments.

King's Library.

Royal Library.

Royal Academy of Science.

City of Brussels.

City of Antwerp.

City of Liege.

Geographical establishment of Brussels.

THE NETHERLANDS

All the Ministerial Departments.

King's Library.

Royal Library.

Library of the General States.

University of Leyden.

Chamber of Commerce of Rotterdam.

Chamber of Commerce of Amsterdam.

FRANCE

All the Ministerial Departments.

Chamber of Peers (Senate).

Chamber of Deputies (Legislative Body).  
 Post-office.  
 Court of Cassation.  
 Court of Accounts.  
 Imperial Academy of Science.  
 Imperial Academy Moral and Political Sciences.  
 Imperial Academy of Medicine.  
 Imperial Museum of Natural History.  
 School of Mines.  
 School of Ponts et Chausses.  
 Normal School.  
 Geographical Society.  
 Asiatic Society.  
 Agricultural Society.  
 Horticultural Society.  
 Geological Society.  
 Society of Encouragement.  
 Imperial Library.  
 Library of the Louvre.  
 Library of the Sorbonne.  
 Private Library of the Emperor.  
 Imperial Printing House.  
 City of Paris.  
 City of Bordeaux.  
 City of Marseilles.  
 City of Metz.  
 City of Nantes.  
 City of Havre.  
 City of Rouen.

## RUSSIA

Imperial Academy.  
 Imperial Library.  
 Imperial Botanical Garden.

## WURTEMBERG

University of Tubingen.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

All the Departments of the Federal Government.  
 The Presidential Residence.  
 Library of Congress.

Patent Office.

Office of Topographical Engineers.

U. S. Military Academy, West Point.

U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis.

National Observatory, Washington.

Supreme Court of the United States.

National Institute.

Military Academy of South Carolina.

Academy of Science and Art, Boston.

National Academy of Design of New York.

Institute of Albany (N. Y.).

American Institute of New York.

Mechanics' Institute, New York.

University of Georgetown (D. C.).

University of Hanover (N. H.).

University Harvard (Mass.).

University Maryland.

College of Brunswick (Me.).

College of Waterville (Me.).

College of Burlington (Vt.).

College of New Haven (Ct.).

College of Columbia (N. Y.).

College of Geneva (N. Y.).

College of Rutgers (N. J.).

College of Annapolis (Md.).

College of Charlottesville (Va.).

College of Chapel Hill (N. C.).

College of Ann Harbor (Mich.).

Brown University, Providence (R. I.).

Union College (N. Y.).

Society of Natural History of Portland (Me.).

Society of Natural History of Boston.

Society of Natural History of St. Louis (Mo.).

Mercantile Library of Boston.

Mercantile Library of New York.

Mercantile Library of Springfield.

Agricultural Society of Massachusetts.

Agricultural Society of Boston.

Agricultural Society of Wilmington (Del.).

Apprentices Library of South Carolina.  
Historical Society of Brunswick (Me.).  
Historical Society of Boston.  
Historical Society of Worcester (Mass.).  
Historical Society of Hartford (Ct.).  
Historical Society of New York.  
Historical Society of Trenton (N. J.).  
Historical Society of Baltimore.  
Historical Society of Richmond (Va.).  
Historical Society of Savannah (Ga.).  
Historical Society of Upper Alton (Ill.).  
Historical Society of St. Louis (Mo.).  
Historical Society of Louisville (Ky.).  
City of Washington (D. C.).  
City of Bangor (Me.).  
City of Portland (Me.).  
City of Boston.  
City of Lowell (Mass.).  
City of New York.  
City of Albany (N. Y.).  
City of Philadelphia (Pa.).  
City of Baltimore (Md.).  
City of Trenton (N. J.).  
City of Hartford (Ct.).  
City of Burlington (Vt.).  
City of Providence (R. I.).  
City of Richmond (Va.).  
City of Raleigh (N. C.).  
City of Charleston (S. C.).  
City of New Orleans (La.).  
City of Savannah (Ga.).  
City of Indianapolis (Ia.).

Chronological table of official acts, documents, etc., by which several Governments have accepted the principle or regulated the application of the system of exchange, from 1832 to 1853:

January 22, 1832. Letter from M. Lichsenthaler, Director of the Royal Library of Munich.

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- December 6, 1833. Letter from Count Maurice Diedrichstein, Director of the Imperial Museum and Library of Vienna.
- January 27, 1834. Letter from Count Charles de Bruhl, superintendent general of the Museum at Berlin, in the name of the King.
- January 27, 1834. Letter from M. Hahn, in the name of the King of Denmark.
- August 1, 1836. Letter from Mr. Alexander Mordwinoff, for General Count de Benkendorff, in the name of the Emperor of Russia.
- March 6, 1836. My first petition is reported, approved and referred to the Minister of Public Instruction by the Chamber of Deputies.
- March 26, 1836. Same reception by the Chamber of Peers, who refer it to the Ministers of the Interior and Public Instruction.
- December 5, 1837. Letter from Mr. Glover, librarian to the Queen of England, in the name of her majesty.
- May 5, 1838. The British Parliament receives favorably my petition; the British Museum authorized to open intercourse of exchanges with foreign establishments.
- February 2, 1839. My second petition reported, approved and referred by the two French Chambers, to the Minister of Public Instruction and the President of the Council of Ministers.
- February 17, 1840. Deliberation of the Royal Patriotic Society of Havana adopting the system of exchange.
- March 26, 1840. Vote of \$3,000, for international exchanges, by the Senate of Louisiana.
- May 7, 1840. Senate of New York approves the system of exchange.
- July 17, 1840. Bill of Congress, authorizing the exchanges of 50 extra copies of every document printed by Congress, to be printed and bound for that purpose.
- February 6, 1841. Sanction of the Governor General of Canada.
- March 14, 1841. Bill of the Legislature of the State of Maine, 50 extra copies of documents are to be



- printed and bound for international exchanges.
- April 9, 1842. My third petition is reported, approved and referred, by the Chamber of Deputies, to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Public Instruction.
- April 29, 1842. Same reception by the Chamber of Peers, as above, and referred to the same ministers.
- December 21, 1842. Deliberation of the Municipal Council of Paris.  
1847. Appropriation of 3,000 fr., for international exchanges, voted to the Department of Public Instruction.  
1847. Appropriation of a similar sum to the committee on the library of the Chambers of Deputies.
- June 26, 1848. Bill of Congress.
- June 30, 1848. Another bill of Congress of the United States, sanctioning the bill of 1840, and granting an appropriation to help on the system.
- July 25, 1848. Resolutions of the Committee on the Library of Congress, in relation to the same.
- April 1850. Presentation of several objects of exchanges to the Chambers of Chili, through A. Vattemare's agency.
- April 1852. Decision from the Minister of the Interior of the Netherlands, appointing A. Vattemare agent of the kingdom.
- May 1852. Decision of the Minister of Finance of Belgium.
- July 29, 1853. Letter from his Excellency, Baron de Korff, member of the Imperial Privy Council, Director of the Public Library of St. Petersburg.
- July 15, 1853. Letter and programme from the central committee for international exchange, appointed by the Minister of the Interior.

Seventeen States of the Union have adopted similar laws to that of Congress, viz.: Maine, March, 1841-44-48; Maryland, March, 1842; Indiana, January, 1844-48; Michigan, March, 1844-48; Massachusetts, February, 1845-49-50;

Rhode Island, January, 1846; New York, October, 1847; Vermont, November, 1847; New Jersey, January, 1848; Pennsylvania, August, 1848; Virginia, September, 1848; South Carolina, December, 1848; New Hampshire, January, 1849; North Carolina, January, 1849; Delaware, March, 1849; Connecticut, May, 1849; Florida, October, 1850, and January, 1853.

Table of the operation of the system of exchanges, from 1847 to 1851, inclusive:

Received by	Books and Pamphlets	Maps and Plans	Engravings	Medals and Coins
The United States of America	30,655	1,067	807	1,288
France .....	25,092	1,318	220	565
Foreign Governments .....	5,264	711		30
Total amounts .....	61,011	3,096	1,027	1,883

To the above must be added, as received and distributed:

From France, the collection of weights and measures of France, 173 prepared birds, several cases of minerals, fossils, and seeds.

From the United States, the collection of weights and measures of the U. S.; six models of vessels and three of dry docks; samples of the manufactures of Lowell, living animals, prepared birds, minerals, specimens of woods, seeds, the plaster cast of the head of a mastodon, fossils, a large specimen of oxydulated iron from the Iron Mountains of Missouri.

#### PERMANENT ORGANIZATION

The following resolutions were presented by Mr. GUILD, and unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Convention be regarded as preliminary to the formation of a permanent Librarians' Association.

Resolved, That a Committee of five be appointed to draft a Consti-

tution and By-Laws for such an Association, and present them at the next meeting of the Convention.

Resolved, That when this Convention adjourn, it adjourn to meet in Washington City at such a time as the said Committee of five may appoint.

Resolved, That this Committee be requested, with reference to this adjourned meeting, to suggest topics for written communications or free discussion, and also to make such other arrangements as shall, in their judgment, be best adapted to meet the wants of the public, in regard to the whole subject of Libraries and library economy.

In accordance with these resolutions, the following gentlemen were appointed on the Committee for Permanent Organization: Prof. C. C. Jewett, of Washington; Mr. Chas. Folsom, of Boston; S. Hastings Grant, of New York; Elijah Hayward, of Ohio, and R. A. Guild, of Providence.

At the close of these deliberations the Convention adjourned, to meet in Washington, upon the call of the above Committee.









